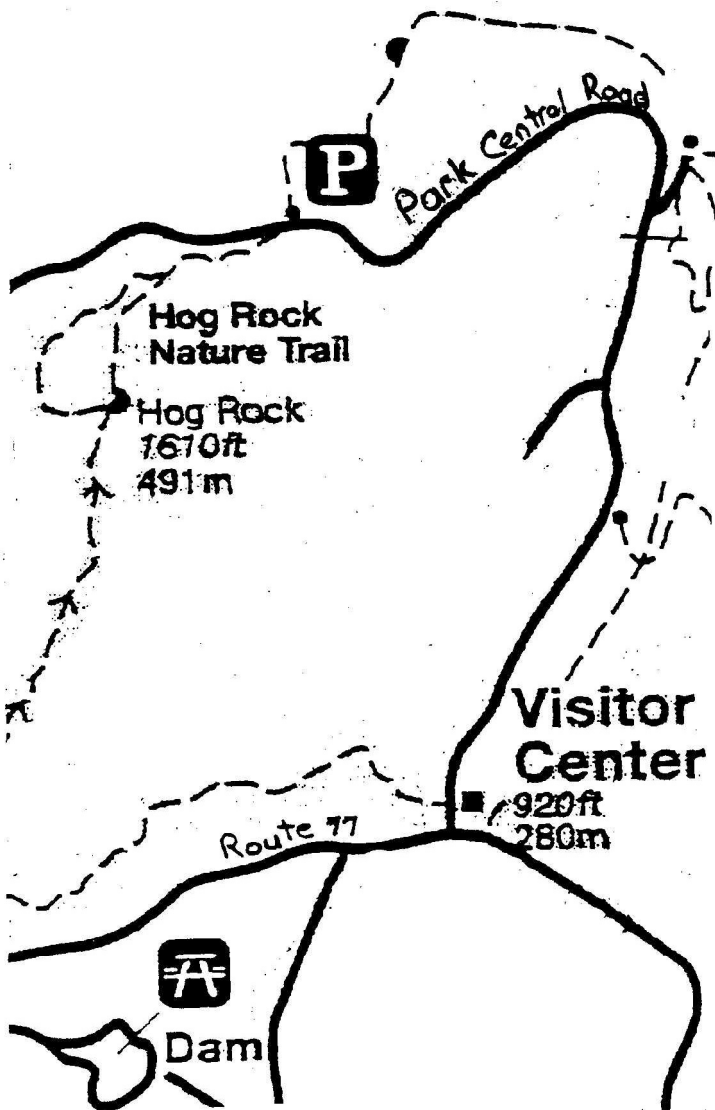


CATOCTIN MOUNTAIN PARK - HOG ROCK NATURE TRAIL



I walked this trail on a foggy, rainy day that made the rest of the world sort of fade away. The birds were very busy even in the rain. I spotted Northern Cardinals, Hairy Woodpeckers, Downy Woodpeckers, Red-bellied Woodpeckers, Tufted Titmice, White Breasted Nuthatches, Carolina Wrens, and even a few Eastern Bluebirds. When I got to Hog Rock overlook, the fog was creeping up the mountain. I could hear the rain slipping off the tree limbs and pattering on last Fall's leaves. What a soothing noise.

This 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ mile long loop trail can be reached by first driving to Catoctin Mountain National Park off Maryland 77, just west of Thurmont. Stop at the visitor center and pick up a Hog Rock Nature Trail guide as the guides are not always where the trail starts. The trail begins on the park road, 1.3 miles from the visitor center, across from Hog Rock Parking area. Follow the numbered posts and use the guide to identify marked trees.

Halfway around the loop you arrive at Hog Rock which, when the weather is clear, gives a splendid view southward over the Monocacy Valley. Make sure you follow the trail markers as other trails do intersect the Hog Rock Nature Trail. This is an easy and a delightful walk in the woods.